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## Conference News and Announcements



**Geoffrey Black**, the newly elected General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ, is in the midst of a ten-conference tour of the whole church, with intent to listen to the concerns and priorities of its people. He will be with us in the Southeast Conference from February 5<sup>th</sup> through the 7<sup>th</sup>. Beginning with a 5:00 potluck dinner at the **Pleasant Hill Community UCC, TN**, on Friday the 5<sup>th</sup>, his visit will continue with two stops in Atlanta on Saturday, the 6<sup>th</sup> with leaders from the TAP program and others from our new church starts. On Sunday Rev. Black will bring greetings to **Victory Church (UCC)** in Stone Mountain, GA, at their early service, preach at **First Congregational UCC, Atlanta** at their 11:00 service, and then will hold a conference-wide listening session at Central Congregational UCC in Atlanta at 2:00 Sunday afternoon. This is an invitation to all clergy and lay folk of the Southeast Conference to join us at 2:00 on Sunday, February 7<sup>th</sup> at **Central Congregational UCC**. We hope you will be with us. There will be refreshments and hospitality.

### Southeast Conference Anticipates Staff Changes in January

The writer of Ecclesiastes notes, "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." In the life of the Southeast Conference, we are preparing for a transition in staffing to prepare us for the next season in our life together. Over the first six months of 2010, **Cameron Trimble**, Associate Conference Minister for Church Development, will transition into her new position as Executive Director of the Center for Progressive Renewal. Cameron has been the vision and engine that has driven our new church development for the last four years. The vision for this Center took shape within the Southeast Conference, which will continue as a partner in support of it along side of Local Church Ministries of the UCC, and Hope for Peace and Justice. The Center will be located in the Southeast Conference offices, and in addition to equipping the new and renewing church strategies for the Southeast Conference, will continue to generate the new church strategies for the UCC.



Another significant change is that **Kathy Clark**, who has served as Associate Conference Minister and Director of the TAP program will have a new job description and title. She will become Associate Conference Minister for Ministry Formation and Leadership Development. In that capacity, Kathy will continue to direct the TAP Program, but she will also have oversight of the process of discernment in preparation for ministry of all candidates of the Southeast Conference for authorized ministry in the UCC. Each of these

changes reflects the clearer focus of the ministries of the Conference on leadership development and the vitality of our congregations. It is our hope that these changes will enable those in our pews and pulpits to experience our presence in new and more dynamic ways.

**Conference Closed Books January 15<sup>th</sup>, and Continues to Offer**



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Discover the UCC!

[www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org)



**Listen to** the 2009 Podcasts with leaders making a difference in the UCC.

Theology Among the People



Check out our Lay Theology Program called "TAP", Theology Among the People. [Click here.](#)



Need books, videos or other resources for your church?

Contact the Resource Connection [here](#).



Are you interested in starting a new church or being a part of a new church start? Click [here](#) to learn more about our Church Development program.



Stay in touch with the work of our national Justice and Witness ministry. Click [here](#) to support this ministry.

### Mission Interpretation Materials to Churches

The 2009 books for the Southeast Conference were closed on **January 15<sup>th</sup>**, and all contributions received after have been credited to 2010. A mailing to all pastors and church treasurers was sent in mid-December alerting them to this. In that mailing, there was a sample of a brochure interpreting OCWM and its uses both within the Conference and around the world. This brochure is available by emailing Gerri at [ghudson@secucc.org](mailto:ghudson@secucc.org) and letting us know the number of copies you need. We also have a brochure interpreting the ministries of the Southeast Conference that can be used for member orientation that we will send in as many copies as you can use. This can also be ordered through Gerri.

### Southeast Conference Offers UCC History and Polity Class on Line for the First Time!

We are pleased to report that after numerous expressions of interest, the Southeast Conference is offering a three-credit seminary class in collaboration with Candler School of Theology online beginning on March 6 and ending on May 8<sup>th</sup>. While the course is available for credit, it can be audited for \$300.00 and will fulfill the history and polity requirement for clergy seeking privilege of call, ordained ministerial standing, and for Students in Care/Members in Discernment. The registration will be available on the Southeast Conference web site mid-January, but if you are interested in auditing, contact Tim Downs at [tdowns@secucc.org](mailto:tdowns@secucc.org) before February 15th. The class will be co-taught by Tim Downs and Kathy Clark. If you wish to take the course for credit, contact the registrar at Candler School of Theology.

### Southeast Conference Partners with LCM and H4P&J to Support the Center for Progressive Renewal

In our last Leaders' Link, we announced the creation of the **Center for Progressive Renewal**, an outgrowth of the ministries of the Southeast Conference over the last five years. The Center resulted from our successful New Church Leadership Institute held each summer in Atlanta, which was held in collaboration with Local Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ. The Institute was developed by the Conference staff in collaboration with the staff of Local Church Ministries of the UCC. The Center expands the Institute from being an annual event into being a year round program for resourcing church development starting this January 2010.

There are several advantages to the creation of such a Center that is affiliated with the Local Church Ministries and the United Church of Christ, but also have its own identity and structure. The steady and rapid changes that have had an impact upon the church and culture call for such an organization built on flexibility for quick response to today's challenges.

As we face the future, the creation of this Center would provide the opportunity for the development of a diverse team of practitioners, coaches, and consultants for new church development to work with congregations and conferences with a particular focus on the Southern region of the United States from the east to the west coast.

With these consultants, several already at work in our conferences, the Center will raise up and broaden the leadership core for church development throughout the UCC. The creation of this Center will also provide the opportunity for the receiving of grants and money from funding sources that would not fund denominations. The Center sets up the possibility for increased funding for church development.

Created as a partnership among Local Church Ministries of the UCC, an organization named Hope for Peace and Justice, and the Southeast Conference of the UCC, we are modeling the kind of collaborative effort that we encourage in church development. The Center for Progressive Renewal will work ecumenically with our partners in other denominations as well. See [www.progressiverenewal.com](http://www.progressiverenewal.com) and [www.growtheucc.org](http://www.growtheucc.org) for further information.

### East Alabama-West Georgia Association Holds Annual Christmas Party



The East Alabama-West Georgia Association Christmas Party took place at the Red Rooster Restaurant, LaGrange, Georgia, on Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup>. Thirty-three people gathered from the **Lanett Congregational Christian Church, Sandy**



**Creek UCC**, and **Oak Grove Christian Church UCC**, for an evening of good food, entertainment by a trio from United Church, LaGrange, and a carol sing.

**Annual Meeting of the Southeast Conference to Be Held June 10-12.  
Circle the Dates!**

We are pleased to announce that the **Annual Meeting** of the Southeast Conference will be hosted by **Church of the Savior, UCC, Knoxville, TN, June 10-12**. We are currently securing confirmations from our keynoters and preachers, but we know that this time that the highlights of the meeting will include the conclusion of our campaign to expand the ministries of the Conference, a celebration of the ministries of Cameron Trimble while she served as Associate Conference Minister for Church Development, the vitality of our TAP (Theology Among the People) program, and much more!

*Posted on January 20, 2010*

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